

On Top Of The News

Email: news@arubatoday.com

Monday, February 8, 2010

INSIDE TODAY

WORLD NEWS

AFGHAN OFFENSIVE



U.S. soldiers of the 4th Battalion, 23th Infantry Regiment, 5th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division test-fire their M-4 rifles as they train at a range in Helmand province, Southern Afghanistan, Sunday, Feb. 7, 2010.

Read more on Page A6

SPORTS NEWS

SUPER BOWL XLIV



Indianapolis Colts quarterback Peyton Manning (18) signals during the first half of the NFL Super Bowl XLIV football game against the New Orleans Saints in Miami, Sunday, Feb. 7, 2010.

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Obama adviser: Stop criticizing anti-terror effort

MATTHEW LEE

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — An exasperated Obama administration newly committed to preaching partisan peace slammed Republicans for playing politics on national security and making ignorant allegations about the investigation into the Christmas airliner plot.

Deputy national security adviser John Brennan complained Sunday that politicians, many of them Republicans, were unfairly criticizing the administration for partisan purposes and second-guessing the case with a “500-mile screwdriver” that reaches from Washington to the scene of the abortive attack in Detroit.

Continued on Next Page



Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, wearing eye protection goggles as he visits an exhibition of Iran's laser science, in Tehran, Iran, Sunday, Feb. 7, 2010. Ahmadinejad ordered his country's atomic agency on Sunday to begin the production of higher enriched uranium, a move that's likely to deepen international skepticism about the country's real intentions on the crucial issue of enriched uranium.

Associated Press

Iran leader orders new step in nuclear program

NASSER KARIMI

Associated Press Writer

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran's president on Sunday ordered his atomic agency to significantly enrich the country's stockpile of uranium, angering Western nations who want to the Islamic republic to halt its nuclear program.

Continued on Page 7

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In this photo provided by Casey Casserino, the Kleen Energy plant on River Road in Middletown, Conn., is seen Sunday Feb. 7, 2010. An explosion blew apart the power plant under construction as workers purged natural gas lines, killing multiple people and injuring at least 14 in a blast that shook homes miles away, officials said.

Associated Press

Gas blast at power plant kills at least 5

JOHN CHRISTOFFERSEN

PAT EATON-ROBB

Associated Press Writers

MIDDLETOWN, Connecticut (AP) — An explosion blew apart a power plant under construction as workers purged natural gas lines Sunday, killing at least five people and injuring a dozen or more in a blast that shook homes for miles, officials said.

Middletown Mayor Sebastian Giuliano said at a late-afternoon news conference that at least 12 people were injured.

Deputy Fire Marshal Al Santostefano told The Associated Press before a news conference Sunday evening that crews were still searching for survivors in the rubble at the Kleen Energy Systems plant in Middletown, about 20 miles south of Hartford.

Santostefano earlier said about 50 people were in the area Sunday morning when the explosion occurred. The mayor said at the news conference it was difficult to tell how many people were at the plant because multiple contractors were working on it with their own employee lists.

“They’re trying to figure out who was on the job today, and where are they now?” Giuliano said. The 620-megawatt plant was being built to produce energy primarily using natural gas. Santostefano said workers for the construction company, O&G Industries, were purging the gas lines, a procedure he called a “blow-down,” when the explosion occurred. □

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In this Sunday, Feb. 7, 2010 photo provided by Meet the Press John Brennan, Deputy National Security Adviser, is interviewed in NBC's "Meet the Press" in Washington. President Barack Obama's top counterterrorism adviser said the Obama administration acted appropriately in dealing with the attempted Christmas Day bombing of an American airliner.

Associated Press

STOP CRITICIZING

Continued from Front Page

"Quite frankly, I'm tiring of politicians using national security issues such as terrorism as a political football," Brennan

said. "They are going out there. They're unknowing of the facts. And they're making charges and allegations that are not anchored in reality."

Brennan's comments came a day after Obama urged Democrats to work with Republicans, telling those attending the Democratic Party's winter meeting that "we can't solve all of our problems alone." The president offered a similar message to a recent gathering of House Republicans. Republicans have been particularly vocal in criticizing the Obama administration's decision to charge accused bomber Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab in civilian criminal court rather than a military tribunal and advise him of his rights to remain silent and have a lawyer. In contrast to claims that the Nigerian suspect stopped talking to authorities, administration officials have contended that the suspect has been providing useful information. Brennan said he had personally briefed top Republican lawmakers on Christmas night about Abdulmutallab's arrest and that none of them had raised

objections then. "There's been quite a bit of an outcry after the fact, where again, I'm just very concerned on behalf of counterterrorism professionals throughout our government, that politicians continue to make this a political football and are using it for whatever political or partisan purposes," he said. Among those he said he briefed were Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell; House Minority Leader John Boehner; and the top Republicans on the congressional intelligence committees, Sen. Kit Bond of Missouri and Rep. Pete Hoekstra of Michigan.

The Republican lawmakers contended that the calls they received were short on details, and they remained critical of the administration's actions.

"Brennan never told me any of plans to Mirandize the Christmas Day bomber," Bond said in a statement. "If he had, I would have told him the administration was making a mistake." The U.S. Supreme Court's 1966 Miranda decision held that people in police custody must be informed of their rights to consult with an attorney and

against self-incrimination prior to questioning, McConnell spokesman Don Stewart said in a statement that Brennan was trying to shift attention from "bad decisions" that allowed terrorists in Yemen, where Abdulmutallab reportedly received al-Qaida training, to gain a head start in the wake of the attack.

"Rather than having highly trained terror investigators spend time with this terrorist, the administration decided to treat him as a common criminal who had a right to a government-funded lawyer and advised of his right to remain silent," Stewart said.

Brennan said that Abdulmutallab was treated no differently than any other terror suspect arrested on U.S. soil and that the FBI and others involved in his arrest acted appropriately.

"I think those counterterrorism professionals deserve the support of our Congress," he said. "And rather than second-guessing what they are doing on the ground with a 500-mile screwdriver from Washington to Detroit, I think they have to have confidence in the

knowledge and the experience of these counterterrorism professionals." Brennan said he was confident that the accused mastermind of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, would face the "full weight of American justice" when he is tried no matter what the venue. The administration had wanted to try Mohammed in New York but backtracked on that plan under criticism, which has included calls for him to be tried by a military tribunal and not a civilian court. "I have no doubt that the American justice system will prevail.

Despite the claims and the criticisms of a lot of folks, including in Congress, that our judicial system is unable to handle these terrorists, I believe that our system of justice here is strong," Brennan said.

"And I'm not going to give al-Qaida the victory of being able to overturn our system of jurisprudence here that is anchored in our Constitution and reflects our values as a people," he said. Brennan spoke on NBC television's "Meet the Press." □

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'Historic' snow strands countless in Mid-Atlantic

BEN NUCKOLS
NAFEESA SYEED

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Planes were grounded, trains stood still and Greyhound buses weren't rolling in the Mid-Atlantic on Sunday, leaving stranded travelers wondering when they'll be able to escape the icy, gray mess created by a major snowstorm.

Hundreds of thousands of homes were without power with temperatures below freezing all day, with utilities warning it could be days before it's all restored. Plows had scraped down to bare pavement on some main thoroughfares while not touching streets in many areas buried by 2 feet or more.

In the nation's capital, meanwhile, Monday will be another day for residents to get back to normal. The federal government made the decision to close agencies Monday, and many school districts across the region were giving students a snow day. For those stranded, however, the thought of another day of weekend wasn't much to smile about. Joel Jones of Durham, North Carolina, said he was on a bus from Baltimore on

Friday. When he arrived in Washington, the rest of the trip was canceled. He walked to Union Station to get a train, where he has remained, sleeping on chairs.

"I'm starting to worry because I take insulin," said the 41-year-old, who has diabetes. "I got enough for like one more shot, so I have enough until tomorrow. Hopefully, I'll get on the bus in the morning."

The National Weather Service called the storm "historic" and reported a foot of snow in parts of Ohio and 2 feet or more in Washington, Delaware, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Parts of Virginia, Maryland and West Virginia got closer to 3 feet. Many roads reopened but officials continued to warn residents that highways were still icy, a remnant from the storm President Barack Obama called "Snowmageddon."

In Washington, the sun was finally shining Sunday and the sounds of shovels could be heard on streets. In contrast to Saturday, when people were frolicking on the barren streets, thoughts turned Sunday to cleanup.

The snow snapped tree limbs onto power lines, and several roofs collapsed under the

weight.

Making matters worse, the weather service issued a storm watch for Tuesday. Some people without electricity worried whether the power would return in time for Sunday night's Super Bowl kickoff — though it was an afterthought for others just trying to stay warm.

Julia Nickles-Bryan and her husband, Charles Bryan, were more focused on keeping their twin 7-year-old daughters warm inside their Baltimore home — where the thermostat read 47 degrees. All they had for heat was a gas stove, gas water heater and a fire in the fireplace.

"We're basically camping," Nickles-Bryan said.

Bill McKenzie, 42, a government contractor from San Antonio, Texas, was staying at a hotel near BWI Airport in Elkridge, Maryland, when the snow hit. He had planned to watch the Super Bowl with friends in the area, but the storm made that impossible. He spent Saturday at a sports bar next to his hotel and was back for much of the day Sunday to watch the game.

"It's a godsend," McKenzie said. "If this place wasn't here, we'd all be starving to



Two telephones are caked in snow and ice Saturday, Feb. 6, 2010, along the Boardwalk in Atlantic City, N.J.

Associated Press

death."

In Philadelphia, 28.5 inches of snow fell during the storm, just shy of the record 30.7 inches during the January 1996 blizzard. Snow totals were even higher to the west in Pennsylvania.

Officials at Washington's Reagan National Airport, which had canceled all flights, hasn't decided when flights would resume. At nearby Dulles International Airport in Virginia, some flights have resumed. □

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Obama invites Republicans to health care talks



President Barack Obama delivers remarks at the Democratic National Committee Winter Meeting in Washington, Saturday, Feb. 6, 2010.

Associated Press

CHARLES BABINGTON
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — In the first major step to revive

his health care agenda after his party's loss of its supermajority in the Senate, President Barack Obama on Sunday invited Republican and Democratic leaders to discuss possible compromises later this month.

Obama's move came amid widespread complaints that efforts so far by him and his Democratic allies in Congress have been too partisan and secretive.

The Feb. 25 meeting's prospects for success are far from clear. Republican leaders on Sunday demanded that Democrats start from scratch, and White House aides said Obama had no plans to do so. "If we are to reach a bipartisan consensus, the White House can start by shelving the current health spending bill," said Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, a Republican from Kentucky. House Republican leader John Boehner of Ohio also threw some jabs while accepting Obama's invitation. He said he was glad the White House "finally seems interested in a real, bipartisan conversation," adding that Americans have rejected "the job-killing,

trillion-dollar government takeover of health care bills passed by the House and Senate."

Obama made health care reform a centerpiece of his presidency, but so far has failed to get a new law enacted. The issue is of critical importance to the United States, which is among the few industrialized nations that doesn't provide universal health care. The private system in the U.S. has left more than 40 million without health insurance coverage.

Obama is reaching out again to Republicans, despite their unanimous opposition to previous Democratic proposals and the election of a new Republican senator who broke the Democrat's hold on the Senate.

Under Senate rules, contentious legislation often requires a three-fifths vote for passage, or 60 in the 100-member body.

When Republican Scott Brown took over the seat of the late Massachusetts Sen. Edward Kennedy last week, he gave the minority Republicans 41 votes they can use to block Obama's agenda.

Obama told CBS's Katie Couric that he and the leaders of both parties will "go through systematically all the best ideas that are out there and move it forward."

Asked if he was willing to start from square one, the president said he wants "to look at the Republican ideas that are out there."

He added: "And I want to be very specific: 'How do you guys want to lower costs? How do you guys intend to reform the insurance markets so people with preexisting conditions, for example, can get health care?'"

"If we can go step by step through a series of these issues and arrive at some agreements," Obama said, "then procedurally, there's no reason why we can't do it a lot faster than the process took last year."

Congress' Democratic and Republican leaders have differed sharply on most major questions in the long-running health care debate. Only one Republican voted for the House health care bill approved in December, and no Republicans voted for a similar Senate version.

White House officials said Sunday that Obama does not intend to restart the health care legislative process from scratch. Many liberal groups and lawmakers want congressional Democrats to use all the parliamentary muscle they have to enact the measure that the Senate passed on Christmas Eve, employing rules that could bypass Republican filibusters to make changes demanded by House Democrats.

The White House has not ruled out such a strategy. But Obama's recent talk of inviting Republican input and extending the debate for several weeks has caused uncertainty about his plans. □

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Evacuees return to California homes covered in mud

RAQUEL MARIA DILLON
Associated Press Writers

LA CANADA
FLINTRIDGE, California
(AP) — Residents

evacuated from foothill communities deluged by weekend mudslides north of Los Angeles were allowed to return home Sunday as crews moved debris and cleared catch basins in anticipation of more rain later in the week.

The final evacuation order was lifted for about 70 homes in the Paradise Valley area of La Canada Flintridge, L.A. County Sheriff's Dep. Guillermina Saldana said. Only residents with valid identification were allowed back into the neighborhood that was choked with a thick layer of mud and debris during a pummeling rain early Saturday.

Forty-three homes in the La Canada Flintridge area were damaged and 500 more evacuated Saturday after mud and water overflowed basins and surged into streets, taking furniture, cars and concrete barriers with it. Nine houses were declared unsafe to enter. About 25 vehicles were damaged.

"In my 20 years of fire service, this is the first time I've seen this much devastation caused by a weather system," Los Angeles County Fire Battalion Chief Mike Brown said while walking past suburban homes with thigh-deep mud in their yards.

Los Angeles County public works crews used bulldozers and other heavy machinery to move boulders, scoop out catch basins and clear roads.

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger toured the area Sunday, stopping to talk to reporters in front of a house where flowing mud left a mark on the wall

at least 5 feet above the ground.

Schwarzenegger hugged a tearful resident whose voice broke as she told him her entire first floor was inundated with at least 2 feet of mud. Karineh Mangassarian told the governor she wanted crews to start digging her house out immediately.

"I want to save my house, but by the time the city gets here it will be too late," Mangassarian said outside her home, where mud reached up to the mailbox. One small rose bush poked out with a couple of pink blooms that withstood the rain. Schwarzenegger said the three county sites set aside for mud disposal might not be enough.

"They need to clean up this area as quickly as possible from the mud. They need permits for a fourth dumping site, disposal site, which have to come from the federal government

and the state," the governor said. "We all have to work together to help the people whose homes were damaged." The sun was shining Sunday on barren mountaintops scarred by last summer's wildfires, but forecasters say more rain could arrive by Tuesday.

About 800 homes across Los Angeles County were evacuated, but most were allowed to return home late Saturday as another round of expected rains proved tame and moved on quickly.

A crew of about 100 yellow-vested church volunteers brought shovels Sunday to help residents clear out the muck from yards and garages and living rooms. Katherine Markgraf walked through a house belonging to her mother, Pat Andersen, pointing out where they might be able to retrieve valuables and mementos from underneath at least three feet of mud. A violent mud flow dragged



A house is covered by mud and debris after a mudslide in La Canada Flintridge, Calif., on Saturday, Feb. 6, 2010. Thunderous mudslides damaged dozens of homes, swept away cars and pushed furniture into the streets of the foothills north of Los Angeles on Saturday as intense winter rain poured down mountains denuded by a summer wildfire.

Associated Press

Anderson's car through the garage wall into her crying as she carried a mud-streaked antique chair out onto the patio. "It's just stuff," she

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Hundreds flee south Afghan town ahead of offensive



Afghan police men check belongings of displaced families, who arrived from Marjah, at a check post in Lashkar Gah, the provincial capital of Helmand province, south of Kabul, Afghanistan on Sunday, Feb. 7, 2010.

**KIM GAMEL
NOOR KHAN**

Associated Press Writers

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan (AP) — Minivans piled high with mattresses and clothing lined up at checkpoints Sunday as hundreds of civilians fled a Taliban-controlled area ahead of a planned NATO offensive

Associated Press

in southern Afghanistan.

The militants, meanwhile, dug in for a fight, reinforcing their positions with rocket-propelled grenades and heavy weapons, according to witnesses.

The U.S. military has not given a start date for the operation to clear insurgents from the Helmand province

town of Marjah, the biggest community in the south under insurgent control. But the military has said fighting will start soon and many residents weren't taking any chances. American aircraft dropped leaflets over Marjah on Sunday warning people of the coming offensive, officers said, and the U.S. fired illumination rounds after sundown, apparently to help spot Taliban positions. Villagers said the leaflets were aimed primarily at the militants, listing several of their commanders by name and warning fighters to leave the area or be killed.

U.S. Gen. Stanley McChrystal, the top NATO commander in Afghanistan, said the success of the operation depends on convincing civilians that the government will improve services once the militants are gone. The offensive in Marjah — a farming community and major opium-production center with

a population of 80,000 — will be the first since President Barack Obama announced he was sending 30,000 additional troops. Afghan President Hamid Karzai discussed the on-going operations in Helmand province in a telephone conversation Sunday with British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, a spokesperson for Brown said. The spokesperson said they "welcomed the leading role" played by Afghan Security Forces in preparing for the offensive, stressing that "Afghan leadership was fundamental to the success of the operation."

U.S. officials have long telegraphed their intention to seize Marjah. McChrystal said the element of surprise was not as important as letting citizens know that an Afghan government will be there to replace Taliban overlords and drug traffickers. "We're trying to create a situation where we

communicate to them that when the government re-establishes security, they'll have choices," McChrystal told reporters Sunday.

The International Committee of the Red Cross said there was no way to count the number of people who have left Marjah because many have moved in with relatives or rented houses in nearby towns instead of registering for emergency relief.

ICRC spokesman Bijan Farnoudi noted a first aid post in Marjah had recorded an increase in patients with battle wounds in the last few weeks. He said the organization was poised to react quickly if a refugee crisis arises. "The burden on families taking in relatives for an extended amount of time can be significant," he said.

Ghulam Farooq Noorzai, the head of the provincial refugee department, estimated that 90 to 100 families had left the Marjah area because of concerns about the operation. Afghan families have an average of six members, according to private relief groups.

Refugee officials held an emergency meeting last week and decided to stockpile food and erect five big tents on a school compound in the nearby provincial capital Lashkar Gah to accommodate any influx, he said.

Mohammad Hakim, a 55-year-old tribal leader in Marjah, said fear has risen over the past two weeks and he knows at least 20 families who had left. He himself planned to take his wife, nine sons, four daughters and grandchildren to live with relatives in Lashkar Gah. □

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Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki attends the media during the annual Munich Security conference in Munich, southern Germany, on Saturday, Feb. 6, 2010. Iran's claims to be close to an agreement on its nuclear program have yet to be backed up by any concrete actions, top Western officials said Saturday, and U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates said it may be time to take a "different tack" with Tehran. U.S. and European officials at a gathering of the world's top defense officials in Munich rejected statements from Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki late Friday that Tehran was "approaching a final agreement."

Associated Press

IRAN UCLEAR PROGRAM Continued from Front Page

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad maintained, however, that Iran was also still willing to follow a U.N. plan to export its uranium abroad for further enrichment. Refining uranium produces nuclear fuel for a power plant but if carried out

far enough can create material for a weapon.

The mixed messages from Tehran have infuriated the U.S. and its European allies, who claim Iran is only stalling for time as it attempts to build a nuclear weapon. U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates called for the international

community to pressure Iran into abandoning its nuclear program.

German Defense Minister Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg said: "Today's statement shows that farce is being played out just like we have seen in the past, that the outstretched hand of the international community has not only not been taken but pushed back."

The U.N.'s nuclear watchdog has been working on a compromise to defuse international tensions over Iran's nuclear program. In October, the U.N. proposed that Tehran export its low-enriched uranium to Russia and France, who would return it a year later as enriched fuel rods that could be used to power Iran's research reactor but couldn't be further refined to make weapons-grade material.

By announcing that Iran would enrich the fuel on its own, Ahmadinejad appeared to reject the U.N. International Atomic Energy Agency's deal

— even though he had seemed to endorse it just days earlier.

Iran wants to enrich its stockpile of uranium to 20 percent, up from 3.5 percent, to power a research reactor to produce medical isotopes. But the international community has demanded a halt to all enrichment activity because the same process is used to produce weapons-grade material.

While material for a nuclear weapon is enriched to a level of 90 percent, just getting its stockpile to the 20 percent mark is a major step for the country's nuclear program.

Achieving that level "would be going most of the rest of the way to weapon-grade uranium," said David Albright, whose Washington-based Institute for Science and International Security tracks suspected proliferators.

Speaking on state television, Ahmadinejad said "God willing, 20 percent enrichment will start." He then turned to the head of Iran's atomic energy

agency, Ali Akbar Salehi, and said: "Begin production of 20 percent (enriched uranium)."

At the same time, Iran's president said he had not "closed the door" to the IAEA's exchange option.

"We are still ready for a swap deal."

Salehi later appeared on state TV and said that a letter would be sent to the IAEA saying that Iran will start enriching its uranium to 20 percent on Tuesday.

Ahmadinejad also said Iran has acquired laser technology for enrichment of uranium, but added, "For now, we do not intend to use it."

The United States and its Western allies have been pushing for a fourth round of U.N. sanctions to be slapped on Iran over its disputed nuclear program. But with Russia, and especially China, skeptical of any new U.N. penalties, they have to tread carefully to maintain unity on how to deal with the Islamic Republic. □



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Ukrainian opposition leader and presidential candidate Viktor Yanukovych speaks to the media in Kiev, Ukraine, Sunday, Feb. 7, 2010. Exit polls showed pro-Russian opposition leader Viktor Yanukovych with a narrow lead Sunday in Ukraine's presidential runoff — a result that could restore much of Moscow's influence in a country that has labored to build bridges to the West.

DOUGLAS BIRCH
PETER LEONARD
Associated Press Writers

KIEV, Ukraine (AP) — Exit polls showed pro-Russian candidate Viktor Yanukovych with a narrow lead in Ukraine's presidential runoff, a result that would close the book on Ukraine's pro-Western Orange Revolution but raise the risk of postelection unrest. Yanukovych went ahead

Associated Press and declared victory, but his opponent Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, a leader of Orange forces, rejected the exit poll data and said Sunday's race was too close to call. "It is too soon to draw any conclusions," she said, urging supporters to fight for every ballot.

Ukraine's Central Election Commission reported early Monday that opposition leader

Exit polls favor Yanukovych in Ukraine presidential race

Yanukovych was leading Tymoshenko by 51.3 percent to 43.3 percent with 27.4 percent of the vote counted.

The National Election Poll exit survey predicted that after the count, Yanukovych would capture 48.5 percent of the vote to 45.7 percent for Tymoshenko, with other voters mostly choosing "Against all." The 2.8 percentage point gap is only slightly larger than the NEP's margin of error of plus or minus 2.5 percent.

The NEP poll initially showed Yanukovych with a 3.2 percentage point lead, but the later released revised figures. All other major exit polls had Yanukovych winning, some by larger margins.

The race narrowed sharply from the first round vote on Jan. 17, when Yanukovych held a 10 percent lead.

At the Yanukovych camp,

top party officials broke into rapturous applause as they heard the exit polls announced, and Anna German, deputy head of Yanukovych's Party of Regions, called on Tymoshenko to concede.

"The first rule for a true democrat is to accept defeat when that is the will of the people," she said. "It is now Yulia Tymoshenko's responsibility to do that."

Tymoshenko has vowed to challenge a vote she claims was rigged by in Yanukovych's favor, as it was in the 2004 elections that set off the Orange Revolution. After weeks of demonstrations, a court threw out the results of that 2000 vote contest and Yanukovych lost a court-ordered revote to Orange forces.

Tymoshenko's campaign chief Alexander Turchinov insisted Sunday there was evidence of

fraud. "Intrigue still remains in place, we remain certain," he said. But Matyas Eorsi, head of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe's election observation mission, called the balloting "calm" and "professional" and said there was no evidence the vote had been stolen.

"We are 100 percent sure that this election was legitimate," Eorsi said. "All the international community, and even more important, the Ukrainian public can accept this result."

A preliminary report by international monitors is expected later Monday.

Mikhail Okhendovsky, a member of Ukraine's Central Election Commission, said the board had no evidence of large scale falsification but expects that the loser will challenge the results in court anyway. □




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Nigerian militants claim attack on Shell pipeline

JON GAMBRELL

Associated Press Wrtier

LAGOS, Nigeria (AP) — A Nigerian militant group claimed it had attacked a major oil pipeline operated by a Royal Dutch Shell PLC subsidiary in Nigeria, though the international oil giant could not confirm the attack occurred.

Nigeria is one of Africa's largest oil producers and reports of attacks in the restive, oil-rich Niger Delta have the potential to affect oil production in Nigeria and oil prices worldwide.

The Joint Revolutionary Council issued a statement Sunday saying its fighters disabled a Shell pipeline in Rivers state that connects several flow stations to the company's Bonny export terminal. The group claimed

Sunday's attack came after police abducted a local chief, prompting them to realize that "only through (an) armed struggle for independence that our people can be freed."

"We believe that it will be a betrayal and disservice to our people if we continue to preach nonviolence in the face of this madness," the group said.

The Joint Revolutionary Council is a smaller militant group that once claimed to be allied with the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta, the main militant force in the Delta. It has carried out attacks in the past, some of which MEND later denied being involved in.

A Shell spokesman dismissed the attack claim.

"We have no report of an incident in our operation," spokesman Tony Okonedo

said.

Militants in the Niger Delta have attacked pipelines, kidnapped petroleum company employees and fought government troops since January 2006. They demand that the federal government send more oil-industry funds to Nigeria's southern region, which remains poor despite five decades of oil production.

That violence has cut Nigeria's oil production by about 1 million barrels a day, allowing Angola to surge ahead as Africa's top oil producer. Still, Nigeria remains the No. 3 crude oil supplier to the U.S., offering the country nearly a million barrels a day in November, according to U.S. government statistics.

However, the main militant group there and others agreed



A fireman extinguishes a fire after petrol tankers, belonging to an oil service company, caught fire at Ogba neighbourhood in Nigeria's commercial capital Lagos February 2, 2010. No case of injuries reported.

Reuters Photo

to a cease-fire brokered by President Umaru Yar'Adua in recent months. Yar'Adua extended an amnesty deal with cash payments to former fighters and the promise of sending more oil money to the region to improve roads and government services.

The deal now appears in jeopardy after Yar'Adua, long troubled by kidney problems, left the country in November for treatment of a heart

condition in Saudi Arabia. He has yet to return, prompting MEND and other militants to begin claiming new attacks in the region.

Only one Shell pipeline has been broken since hostilities began again, a line running through Bayelsa State that the company said oil thieves ruptured. However, MEND says that line was attacked by militants with explosives rather than thieves. □

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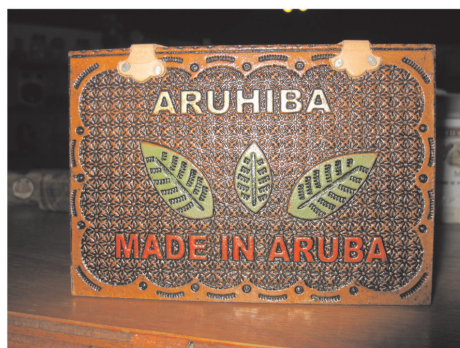
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ORANJESTAD- Benjamin Petrocchi started the newest export product of Aruba, locally produced cigars called "Aruhiba". These cigars are produced and cultivated in Aruba.



Petrocchi has always had an interest in the cigar business and has also sold Premium Cuban Cigars, and now he is growing his own tobacco crop. After many attempts and trips to Santo Domingo and Cuba he started his own production and cultivation of Aruhiba Cigars in Aruba. The process took ten years. Petrocchi dedication to the cigars is important for the molding and process of making a perfect cigar which takes a long time. The cigar box is specially designed for the cigars with the logo "Aruhiba".

Petrocchi considers Aruhiba a promotion for Aruba through fine quality cigars. The company sells International cigars as well. Buy a gift box of Aruhiba Corona with five cigars and you will get 1 FREE cigar of \$35. Located at the Historic Dutch Windmill. Open on Sunday from 9am to 8pm. And also at Tamarijn Hotel open from 9am to 1pm. Aruhiba is only available in above mentioned stores. Visit our authentic tobacco farm where cigars are handmade.



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Freedom Fighters presents the 10th Annual Tribute to Bob Marley



On Saturday, February 6, the Freedom Fighters Foundation presented a night of peace and unity. This event included Black survival with the Ebony steel pan orchestra. Featured artist was Luciano and Jah Messajah band! Other artists live on stage were Sanjay from Jamaica; Harry Mo from St. Croix, USVI; Segun Marlene; the Freedom Fighters band; Ku-J; Ezekiel; Carl Ford and DJ Pauly! It was a celebration with a positive vibe!

Freedom Fighters Foundation is a non profit organization working hard to keep Caribbean culture alive. On November 2, 1999, Freedom Fighters organized its first show for H.I.M. Haile Selassie I the first, the Coronation Celebration was held at the Speetje Arcade on Front Street.

On February 6, 2000, Black Story Celebration Tribute to Bob Marley, which took place at the Kangaroo Court House Alley was born, and is now an annual event. On August 17, 2000, tribute to honourable Marcus Mosiah Garvey was started and is now also an annual event. The Freedom Fighters have had successful shows at

several locations including the university parking lot, Reggae Café, the boardwalk and Emilio Wilson Park. They took things to a different level in 2004 when they brought world known Jamaican dub poet Mutabaruka to headline their event.

In 2008 they brought in reggae artistes "I Wayne and Fantan Mojah" for the 9th annual tribute to Bob Marley & Black story celebration and now on February 6, they will

be celebrating 10 years of educating people spiritually and mentally, and with the blessing of the Most High they want to continue to fulfil this type of work for the people living on St. Maarten. With consciousness they want to teach the children of St. Maarten to have a brighter future; that's why their shows are for all races, all colours and all tongues.

Jamaican born Roots Reggae artist Luciano, whose real

name is Jephther McClymont OD, first began recording in 1992, with his debut single "Ebony & Ivory" on the Aquarius Record label and followed with his debut album "Moving Up" for RAS records in 1993.

Luciano is the seventh of nine children and was born to extremely spiritual and musical parents in Daveyton, a small district in the central parish of Manchester, Jamaica. Luciano's music is influenced by Stevie Wonder, Frankie Paul and late reggae singer Dennis Brown. It was later on that he changed his stage name to Luciano while often being referred to as "Jah Messenjah" and also at around that time collaborating with Fattis Burell's Xterminator label where he developed his conscious roots aspect.

After recording several LPs for Burell he recorded a set for Island Records before starting an independent recording career. After voicing several covers for the Producer Sky High, Luciano released "Give My Love A Try," which was produced at Castro Brown's New Name Studio and was a hit in Jamaica. It was there that Luciano met Freddie McGregor the former Studio

One child star who had become an International Reggae Superstar. Joining McGregor's Big Ship production company, Luciano began creating cultural, conscious reggae that reflected his religious and social concerns. Again in 1993, Luciano scored a 1 UK reggae hit with the song "Shake It Up Tonight" but Luciano says, "I didn't see myself going in that pattern, singing love songs, dressed in a felt hat, looking smooth; it looked very splashy."

Luciano is an award-winning artist and although his object is to stay humble, he has received numerous awards including "Most Spiritual and Educative Singer" and Mandela's "Most Cultural Artist."

He even received a plaque from the Jamaican government to encourage him in his work. Doing good works are not confined to just music for Luciano, as he is a firm believer that he should be a positive role model. In his own words: "I've never stooped low and I'm not gonna bow to Babylon and no matter how much me angry bout certain tings, me nah come pon stage and express myself inna no negativeness."

As a messenger, Luciano always strives to be true and righteous as he delivers the word of Jah. He says, "I cannot become egotistical about it." He was awarded the Order of Distinction in the rank of Officer on October 15, 2007, in recognition of his contribution to reggae music.

In July 2009, Luciano paid his respects to fellow musician Michael Jackson by releasing a Reggae tribute of Jackson's iconic song, "We are the World" on Lion I Records. The original song was recorded by many famous musicians and actors of the 1980s and raised money through the USA for Africa charity for hunger and AIDS relief. □

Bob Marley helps Haiti



Reggae legend Bob Marley will be helping the Haiti earthquake relief effort from beyond the grave thanks to a 65th birthday party with a difference.

Members of Marley's family and friends gathered at Los Angeles art gallery for Bob Marley's 65th birthday exhibition.

Rare artwork and photography featuring the reggae great were on sale, as well as Marley coffee and other items.

All proceeds from the event will benefit Doctors Without Borders' efforts in Haiti. □



Toyota to announce action soon for Prius hybrids

By KELLY OLSEN,
AP Business Writer

TOKYO – Toyota said Sunday that it will soon announce plans to deal with braking problems in its prized Prius hybrid amid reports it has decided to issue a recall for the vehicle in Japan, a possible new embarrassment for the world's biggest automaker.

Toyota Motor Corp. has already had to recall more than 7 million other cars in the U.S., Europe and China over a sticky accelerator and floor mats that can get caught in the gas pedal. Those problems and criticism of Toyota's response to them have sullied the stellar reputation for quality long enjoyed by one of Japan's corporate icons.

Separately, the company has told dealers in the United States it is preparing to repair the brakes on thousands of Prius vehicles there, according to an e-mail sent by a company executive. It was unclear whether Toyota planned a formal U.S. recall. "We will make an announcement soon on the action we plan to take," spokeswoman Ririko Takeuchi said, commenting on media reports Sunday that the company has decided to issue a Japan recall. Takeuchi did not confirm those reports. The Prius is the world's top-selling gas-electric hybrid and its fuel efficiency has drawn intense interest amid concerns about global warming and dependence on fossil fuels.

Toyota decided Saturday on a recall in Japan covering its latest Prius model and has notified domestic dealers, Japan's largest newspaper, the Yomiuri, reported without naming sources. It said Toyota would announce the move early in the coming week after consulting with the



Toyota Motor Corp.'s new Prius is displayed at the Toyota museum in Toyota, central Japan, Saturday, Feb. 6, 2010.

(AP Photo/Itsuo Inouye)

Japanese government. Japan's Kyodo News agency and TV Asahi carried similar reports. Kyodo said Toyota had started notifying dealers and that at least 170,000 vehicles in Japan would be subject to the recall.

Phone calls to the section at Japan's transport ministry dealing with recalls went unanswered Sunday. None of about 10 Toyota dealers in Tokyo and the western Japanese city of Osaka said they had received any notification. Three dealers in the U.S. said the same thing on Sunday.

Prius drivers in Japan and the U.S. have complained of a short delay before the antilock brakes kick in — a flaw Toyota says can be fixed with a software programming change. The brakes will work if the driver keeps pushing the pedal. The brake problem affects about 270,000 Priuses that were sold in the U.S. and Japan starting last May. The company says it has already fixed vehicles that went on sale since last month.

Bob Carter, a Toyota group vice president, sent an e-mail message Friday night to U.S.

dealers saying the automaker is working on a Prius repair plan and will disclose more details early this week. At least 100 drivers of Prius cars in the U.S. have complained to the government that their brakes seemed to fail momentarily when they were driving on bumpy roads. The government says the problem is suspected in four crashes and two minor injuries.

Public awareness of the problem "has prompted considerable customer concern, speculation, and media attention due to the significance of the Prius image," Carter said in the e-mail. "We want to assure our dealers that we are moving rapidly to provide a solution for your existing customers." Toyota on Sunday morning began airing spots on U.S. television saying that the company is "working around the clock" to build the highest-quality vehicles and to restore the faith of its customers.

"In recent days, our company hasn't been living up to the standards that you've come to expect from us," an unidentified announcer said in a voiceover. □



FILE - In this Thursday, Feb. 4, 2010 file photo, traders Richard Newman, left, and Albert Young work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. On Thursday, the Standard & Poor's 500 index suffered its biggest one-day drop in more than nine months because of worries about debt problems in Greece, Portugal and Spain.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew, File)

Recovery, debt woes to hound

By Ellis Mnyandu

NEW YORK (Reuters) – U.S. stocks face more turbulence that could send indexes spiraling through key levels this week as doubts about the global recovery's pace persist and fears linger over Europe's sovereign debt woes.

Investors worry that the debt problems will hinder efforts to sustain the nascent economic recovery and undermine confidence in the stability of governments that stand behind the euro.

With the Dow briefly dipping below 10,000 last week and the benchmark Standard & Poor's 500 (.SPX) down 7.3 percent from its 15-month closing high of January 19, money managers and analysts say there is a growing sense that the U.S. stock market's rally from the lows of March 2009 has all but run its course. "I am in a camp that believes we're in a correction. The mood has turned short-term negative," said Eric Kuby, chief investment officer at NorthStar Investment Management Corp in Chicago. "The general trend for more than nine months has been for the market to rally, but now it seems as if the enthusiasm has abated, and it's hard for the market to move forward."

EUPHORIA VS REALITY

Investors had bet the start of 2010 would show that the recovery was gaining momentum, but their optimism has been met with more signs of labor market turbulence and worry over possible contagion from fiscal upheaval in Greece, Portugal and Spain. As a result, the euro has fallen sharply against the U.S. dollar due to risk aversion, hurting stocks and the prices of global commodities. At Friday's close, the benchmark S&P 500 marked its fourth straight weekly drop, falling 0.7 percent. For the week, the Dow slid 0.6 percent and the Nasdaq shed 0.3 percent.

Wrapping up an international meeting in Canada's Arctic, European policy-makers aimed to persuade nervous markets that they have things under control by offering reassurances about debt-strapped Greece and a promise to make banks repay rescue funds. European Central Bank President Jean-Claude Trichet said -- in a statement issued on Saturday after two days of talks by ministers and central bankers from the Group of Seven's rich industrialized countries -- that he believed Greece would meet tough new targets to reduce its budget deficit. □

SPORTS

Aruba TODAY

AT PRESS TIME

Colts lead Saints 17-16 after 3rd in Super Bowl

By STEVEN WINE

AP Sports Writer

MIAMI — A record-tying 96-yard drive and a goal-line stand helped the Indianapolis Colts take a 17-16 lead over the New Orleans Saints after three quarters in the Super Bowl.

The Colts matched the longest touchdown drive in Super Bowl history, capped by Peyton Manning's 19-yard scoring pass to Pierre Garcon in the final minute of the first period for a 10-0 lead.

The Saints kicked a field goal, then drove 71 yards to the 1 late in the half. But on third down, Mike Bell was stopped for no gain, and Pierre Thomas had the same result on fourth down. Gary Brackett hit Thomas first, and Clint Session finished the tackle.

New Orleans rallied to take a brief lead in the third quarter, but Manning and the Colts



New Orleans Saints running back Pierre Thomas (23) dives into the end zone after a short pass reception against the Indianapolis Colts during the second half of the NFL Super Bowl XLIV football game in Miami, Sunday, Feb. 7, 2010. Signaling the play is back judge Greg Steed.

Associated Press

answered with a 76-yard drive capped by Joseph Addai's 4-yard run.

The Saints risked an onside kick to start the second half, and the gamble paid off when Chris Reis recovered for them at their 42 after the Colts' Hank Baskett failed to come up with the ball.

Six plays later, New Orleans had the lead for the first time. Thomas took a swing pass from Drew Brees, juiced past several defenders and dived into the end zone for a 16-yard score, putting the Saints up 13-10.

Manning came right back. He hit Dallas Clark for 27 yards, then Clark again on third down for 11 before Addai scored.

New Orleans' Garrett Hartley kicked field goals of 46, 44 and 47 yards, including one on the final play of the half to leave Indy with a 10-6 lead.

Continued on Page 14



NBA Roundup

Magic use 19-0 burst in third to top Celtics 96-89

By HOWARD ULMAN

AP Sports Writer

BOSTON — Vince Carter led a 19-0 surge in the third quarter and finished with 20 points as the Orlando Magic beat Boston 96-89 on Sunday, moving ahead of the Celtics and into second place in the Eastern Conference.

Carter scored nine points during a rally that began after

Orlando Magic's Vince Carter, left, shoots over Boston Celtics' Kendrick Perkins in the first quarter of an NBA basketball game, Sunday, Feb. 7, 2010, in Boston. The Magic won 96-89.

Associated Press

Rajon Rondo's 3-pointer gave the Celtics a 60-51 lead with 7:17 left in the third quarter — Boston's fourth and final field goal of the period.

The Magic turned a 51-40 halftime deficit into a 76-62 lead after the third and stayed in front by at least five points the rest of the way.

Dwight Howard had 16 points and 13 rebounds for Orlando. Rondo scored 17 points and Ray Allen added 13 for the Celtics.

The Celtics made a late run with seven straight points that cut the lead to 94-89. But Rashard Lewis just beat the 24-second buzzer with a short

driving shot that made it 96-89 with 18 seconds to go.

The Magic (34-17) rebounded from a loss Friday night to Washington in which they blew a 21-point lead and moved one game ahead of the Celtics (32-17).

Boston lost despite getting two important players back. Paul Pierce, their leading scorer, returned after missing two games with a strain on the top of his left foot and scored 13 points. Key substitute Marquis Daniels sat out the previous 29 games following surgery for a torn ligament in his left thumb and finished with eight points. □

NHL Roundup

Capitals win 14th in row, beat Penguins 5-4 in OT

By JOSEPH WHITE

AP Sports Writer

WASHINGTON — Neither snow nor ice nor a three-goal deficit could keep Alex Ovechkin and the Washington Capitals from stunning their archrivals and winning a 14th straight game.

Ovechkin scored an arena-rocking hat trick and got the assist on the winning goal in overtime Sunday, and the Capitals kept up their pursuit of NHL history with a 5-4 win over the Pittsburgh Penguins. Mike Knuble poked in the rebound 2:49 into overtime after Ovechkin's shot hit the post during a Capitals power play, earned when Brooks Orpik was sent off for high sticking.

Washington's winning streak is tied for the third longest in league history and three shy of the record of 17, set by the Penguins from March 9-April 10, 1993.

Ovechkin's three goals gave him a league-high 42, pulling away from Sidney Crosby after the Pittsburgh star had tied him at 39 by scoring a pair in the first period.

The Capitals trailed 4-1 late in the second period, but Eric Fehr poked in his own rebound to cut the lead to two before Ovechkin took over in the third.

The two-time reigning league MVP tried to redirect a shot, had the puck deflect back to his feet and wristed it past Marc-Andre Fleury with 13:09 left in the game. Ovechkin then tied the score with a backhand from the edge of the right circle after Nicklas Backstrom won a faceoff with 8:54 to play, making the sellout crowd delirious as red hats flooded the ice to celebrate the first hat trick of the season by any Capitals player — even though Washington is by far the highest scoring team in the league.

Jordan Staal scored twice and Evgeni Malkin had two top-

notch assists for the Penguins, who nearly pulled off the win despite a Friday-Saturday blizzard that paralyzed the nation's capital with 2 feet of snow and forced the visitors to scramble to find a way into

town.

With the nearby airports closed, the Penguins had to fly into Newark, N.J., from Montreal after their Saturday afternoon game against the Canadiens. □

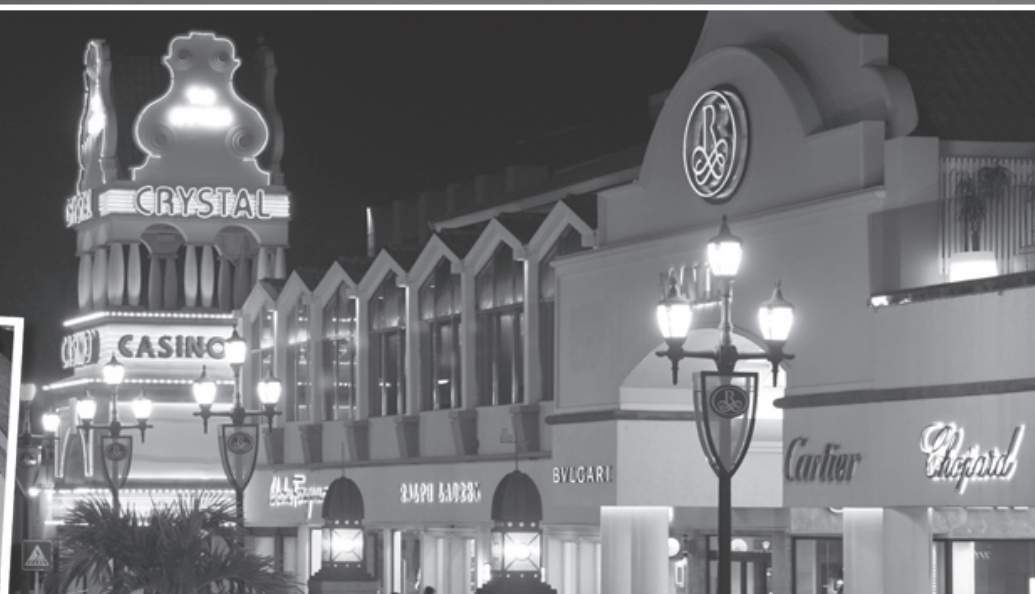


Washington Capitals' Alex Ovechkin, of Russia, skates past hats after scoring a hat trick during the third period of an NHL hockey game against the Pittsburgh Penguins, Sunday, Feb. 7, 2010, in Washington. The Capitals won 5-4 in overtime.

Associated Press

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Indianapolis Colts running back Joseph Addai (29) is congratulated by teammates Charlie Johnson (74) and Ryan Lilja (65) after his 4-yard touchdown run against the New Orleans Saints during the second half of the NFL Super Bowl XLIV football game in Miami, Sunday, Feb. 7, 2010.

Associated Press

SUPERBOWL

Continued from Page 12

It was a lower-scoring game than expected by the NFL's two most potent offenses and two most accurate quarterbacks.

The Colts, bidding for their second Super Bowl title in four years, drove 53 yards for a field goal on their opening possession, while the Saints totaled only one first down in their first two series.

The Colts' first touchdown drive began after a punt pinned the Colts back at their 4. Manning threw from his end zone on the first play for a gain of 11. Addai ran for 16, 11 and 26 yards during the sequence. On third-and-6 at the 19, Manning hit Garcon in stride in the end zone on a simple go route.

In the 11-play drive, 61

yards came on the ground. The TD march matched the longest in Super Bowl history by the Chicago Bears against New England in 1986.

Manning was 17 for 24 for 162 yards after three quarters, and Brees was 25 for 32 for 244. Addai had 79 yards rushing in 10 carries. All-Pro defensive end Dwight Freeney started for the Colts despite a sprained right ankle that left his status in question all week. His presence gave the defense a boost, and Indy dug in early against the NFL's highest-scoring offense.

New Orleans, playing in the Super Bowl for the first time, was outgained 154-36 in the first quarter while running only 10 plays.

The Saints began to move the ball early in the second period, marching from

their 11 to the Colts 22. But Freeney sacked Brees on third down, and Hartley kicked a 46-yard field goal. The Saints took the opening kickoff, but went three and out. The Colts' first play was an 18-yard completion from Manning to Clark.

Manning hit Austin Collie for 14 yards on third-and-7. But three plays later Manning overthrew Garcon on third down, and Indy settled for Matt Stover's 38-yard field goal.

The 42-year-old Stover became the oldest player ever in a Super Bowl.

Courtney Roby fumbled on the ensuing kickoff, but Reis recovered. New Orleans picked up one first down before punting again.

The Saints came in 15-3, while the Colts were 16-2, with Indy a five-point favorite. □

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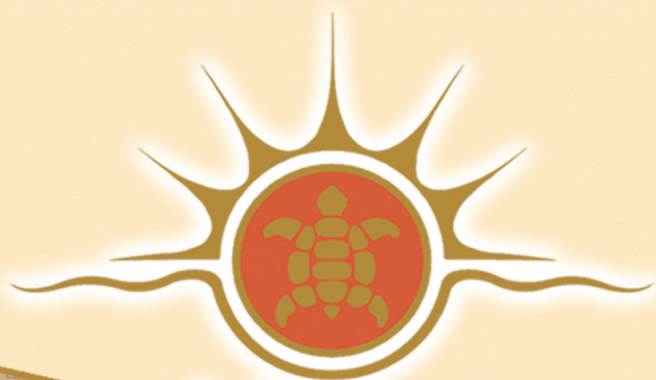
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Stricker wins at Riviera, goes to No. 2 in world

DOUG FERGUSON
AP Golf Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Steve Stricker won the Northern Trust Open for his fourth victory since May to move to No. 2 in the world ranking on Sunday.

Starting the final round Sunday with a six-shot lead at Riviera, Stricker never had it easy. He led by only two shots after five holes, and still didn't feel as though he had the tournament wrapped up until he tapped in for a 1-under 70. He finished two ahead of Luke Donald.

Donald had all the momentum on the front nine until missing consecutive putts inside 10 feet. He never got any closer the rest of the day and closed with a 66. Dustin Johnson had a 66 and J.B. Holmes shot 67 to tie for third.

Stricker, the runner-up at Riviera last year, has won four of his last 15 starts and is No. 2 for the second time in his career. He won for the eighth time in his career, and once again welled up with tears after the victory. This time, all it took was a reminder of where he was four years ago, when he lost his PGA Tour card. "I remember where I was and where I am now," Stricker said. "It doesn't get any better."

Stricker didn't make it easy on himself, having to grind for

pars as Donald kept pouring in birdies. But after Donald missed two short birdie attempts, Stricker fired off two straight birdies to restore a comfortable margin.

He finished at 16-under 268 and earned \$1.152 million to go over \$25 million for his career. Donald made birdie on the 17th to again trim the lead to two shots, but that was as close as he ever got. He closed with a 66. Dustin Johnson had a 66 and J.B. Holmes made a late surge for a 67 to tie for third.

"It was hard today," Stricker said. "I aged a lot out there. It was a grind from the get-go." Phil Mickelson, trying to become the first player to win three straight years at Riviera, had a 73 and finished 14 shots behind. Even as he left the course Saturday night leading by five shots, Stricker said he expected a long, tough day.

The long day came from having to return in the morning darkness to finish off his third round. With temperatures in the 40s before the sun climbed over Sunset Boulevard, he rolled in a 30-foot birdie putt on the 15th, hit 7-iron to 4 feet for birdie on the 16th and led by seven shots until a bogey on the 18th, his first in 32 holes. Stricker completed a 66 for a six-shot lead.

Stricker missed a 5-foot birdie

Steve Stricker kisses the trophy as the winner of the Northern Trust Open golf tournament at Riviera Country Club in the Pacific Palisades area of Los Angeles Sunday, Feb. 7, 2010.

Associated Press

putt on the easy opening hole and looked tight over the next hour as Donald applied enormous pressure. Donald had birdie chances inside 20 feet for the first eight holes, converting three of them. His 6-footer at No. 5 pulled him within two shots, and he followed that with a tee shot to 10 feet on the sixth.

Donald had the momentum. He just never had the lead.

He missed the birdie chance at No. 6, missed another birdie putt from 8 feet on the next hole, and that was his best shot. Stricker birdied the next two holes from inside 10 feet to take a three-shot lead to the back nine. Stricker still didn't look as good as he did the first three rounds, missing greens to the left. But he had five consecutive one-putt greens and continued to get himself out of minor jams.

Stricker last held the No. 2 ranking in September after winning in Boston—although he likely still would have to win at three more times to catch Tiger Woods, who is out indefinitely as he tries to save his marriage. □



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website: www.MagicLive.com
Blog: www.MagicOnTheBeach.com

Fine & Affordable Dining at Pam Pam Restaurant

Meet Chef Ludwich Samson and his exquisite menu now unveiled!



Nestled in the quiet neighborhood of Boegoeroei, Perle d'Or apartment complex houses Dutch students and vacationers, as well as a cozy garden eatery, Pam Pam Restaurant & Bar. Aiming to attract a more diverse clientele, Pam Pam has recently adopted a more upscale dining concept. In order to pilot this new concept, rising local chef Ludwich Samson was brought on board, and in just two months on the job, he has

more than proven his worth.

Laid-back, refreshingly young, and ambitious, Ludwich began his career as a chef by enrolling in Aruba's hospitality and culinary arts school—the best decision he has ever made, he wholeheartedly claims. With ten years in the kitchen and three years as a chef, Ludwich has developed an impressive arsenal of cooking skills. He attributes the majority of his growth as a chef to his years

of working under his mentor, Vittorio Muscarllo, owner of Hostaria Da'Vittorio and one of the most highly respected chefs on Aruba.

In his two months with Pam Pam, Ludwich has entirely remodeled the kitchen to make it more efficient. He has also created a whole new menu featuring particularly unique dishes in order to distinguish Pam Pam from the endless number of restaurants along Aruba's hotel strip. While the menu still offers Dutch snacks and typical Dutch platters like sate to appease the many Dutch interns residing at Perle d'Or, the rest of the menu offers upscale fusion cuisine. Lemon grass and chillies give several seafood dishes a Thai flair; homemade ravioli and beef carpaccio salute Italy; crustacean ceviche adds a Peruvian element; and Indonesian spices add zest to a handful of casual main dishes.

Ludwich also craftily adds little unexpected twists to some classic dishes, elevating the uniqueness of his menu. One of his personal favorites is his porcini-crusted filet mignon served with a thyme red-wine reduction. He also delights in the fact that most diners have a hard time figuring out the sweet and spicy deliciousness of his signature crustacean platter. Other interesting interpretations include lump-crab lollipops, chicken cordon blue unorthodoxly stuffed with ricotta and bacon, and for dessert, tiramisu that promises an untraditional layer of decadent Bailey's chocolate mousse.

Needless to say, Ludwich is creative in the kitchen and works extremely hard, currently putting in 12 to 16 hours a day, seven days a week; but he insists that this is not what makes a good chef good. "I simply love what



I do for a living," confides Ludwich, and this is what guarantees success in the kitchen and contented diners. Of course, being a chef can be downright stressful, but Ludwich thrives on the rush of adrenaline on busy nights. And when he peers out of the kitchen and sees a restaurant full of people enjoying their meals, he experiences immense satisfaction. For reservations call: 5877710 or 7483848, or visit us at www.pampamaruba.com. □

Children's Parades brimming with color and fun



ORANJESTAD – TBS Brassband heralded the arrival of the 2009 Children's Carnival parade in Oranjestad.

Continued on Pages B8 & 9



The Hague pays off Statia's debt

~ Bijleveld-Schouten starts Caribbean visit Monday ~



THE HAGUE--Dutch Government announced on Friday that it has started the reorganisation of the backlog in payments of the Island Territory of St. Eustatius to the general Antillean pension fund APNA. The amount of the money is NAf. 6,686,652.15, almost 2.3 million euros, and involves the backlog up to and including 2005. The backlog in payments of 2006 and 2007 will also be paid as soon as the Council for Financial

Supervision CFT renders a positive advice. The amount for 2006 and 2007 is NAf. 1,384,667 (55,280 euros). The debts of the Island Territory of Curaçao will also be paid of the Country the Netherlands Antilles, it was announced in a press release issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs and Kingdom Relations BZK on Friday. The reorganisation of Curaçao's debts was agreed upon in the most recent Political Steering Group (PSG) meeting on December 9, 2009. In the near future, an amount of more than NAf. 43 million (some 15.5 million euros) will be paid to Curaçao so the debts of Study Financing Foundation Curaçao SSC, the garbage collection and waste processing company Selikor, the drug rehabilitation foundation FMA, the educational centre Feffik, the road fund Stichting Wegenfonds Curaçao and the

bus company Autobusbedrijf Curaçao could be paid. The Netherlands is reorganising the debts so the new entities, Countries Curaçao and St. Maarten, and the BES islands - Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba - as part of the Dutch Constellation, could start with a clean sheet when the Country the Netherlands Antilles is dismantled October 10, 2010. As agreed upon in the Final Declaration of November 2006, there are conditions attached to the debt reorganisation, such as financial supervision and good governance codes. State Secretary of Kingdom Relations, Ank Bijleveld-Schouten, has ceased payments to Bonaire "because it is unclear whether the island wants to stick to the earlier agreements," it was stated in the press release. Bijleveld-Schouten starts a five-day visit to Aruba and Curaçao this Monday. On

Monday, she will first visit Aruba where she will meet Governor Fredis Refunjol, several members of the cabinet, Chairman of Parliament Andy Lee and the faction leaders of the political parties. On Tuesday, she meets with Aruba's Council of Ministers and will visit the Police Force. On Wednesday, Bijleveld-Schouten will be in Curaçao. The main agenda point during that visit will be the progress of constitutional reform in the Kingdom. On Thursday, there will be a political consultation with the Country the Netherlands Antilles, Curaçao and St. Maarten. On the agenda of the PSG will be the cooperation of the police forces of the new countries and the corps for the BES islands, as well as the joint facility to combat organised and international crime. Bijleveld-Schouten will return to the Netherlands on Friday. □

The Promenade Restaurant

A culinary adventure unfolds nightly

Promenade restaurant appetizer night presents the ultimate small plates experience



Photography by Kenny Theysen



When Chef Peter Dorer opened The Promenade Restaurant in San Nicolas ten year ago, he gave many loyal clients a reason to travel to Aruba's "Sunrise City," as it became a favorite dining spot for the residents on that side of the island. Four years ago The Promenade moved to their present imminently convenient location in Sun Plaza, just at the large intersection of Oranjestad and the Sasaki highway, and has expanded the extremely popular "Appetizer Night" from only Fridays to every night of the week. Their special Unlimited Appetizer Menu, from 5:00 until 10:00 p.m. provides all-you-can-eat choices of their diverse selection of delectable

starters, quite often the most interesting aspect of many menus, as well as a fine selection of their gourmet main courses, prepared in smaller appetizer-size portions. Diners can select and enjoy as many different dishes as they care to try, complimented by a collection of best-selling wines to pair with seafood, meat or poultry dishes. Escargot Bourignonne, chicken cordon bleu, smoked salmon and beef carpaccio with balsamic house dressing are only a sampling of the twenty dishes to choose from; all prepared fresh when ordered. One can select two at a time until satisfied. It was quite an experience to find out how many of these

dishes we could try without over-stuffing ourselves...

We even decided to just taste bits off each other's plates, while the staff kept them coming steadily. Our little "secret" you should try too... While we watched diners at other tables enjoy cheese cake, chocolate mousse and ice cream, or all



together.

We enjoyed the to-live-for and still-after-all-these-years the very amazing corn pudding as an extra side dish and proved again that it is incomparable as a dessert.

And, although the Appetizer Night menu is an irresistible deal and also you can ask for an A-La-Carte-Menu.

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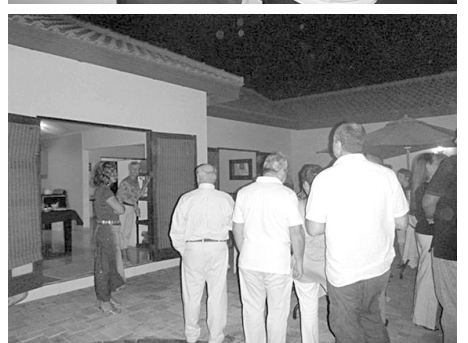
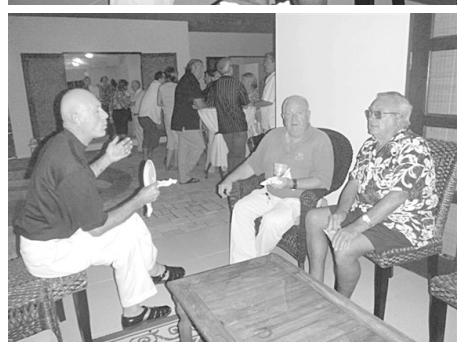
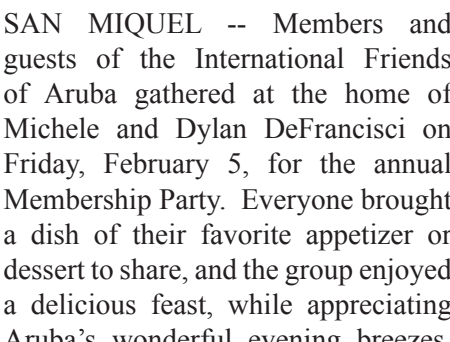
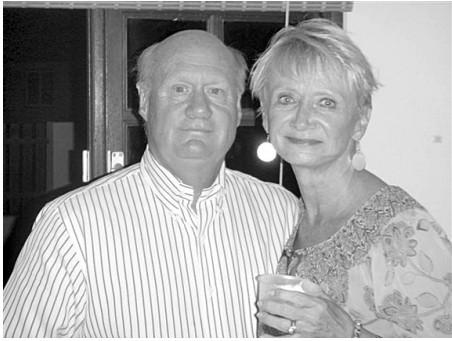
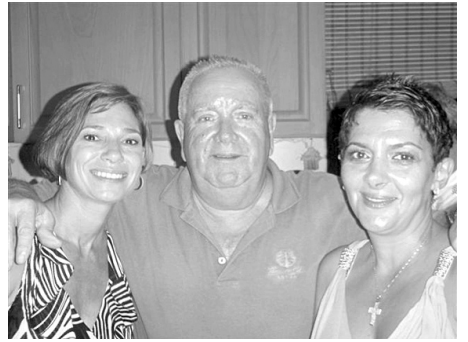


The owners Peter & Lidia Dorer and Erick Semeleer

worth another visit. After dinner, we sneaked a peak in the restyled garden behind the inside dining room, only to be delighted by the privacy- and romantic atmosphere offered on the patio and in its surroundings, with twinkling lights, flowing white curtains and plants providing an ambiance that is totally different, plus the live music played by an incredible Aruban artist and his guitar, certainly pleasantly unexpected.

And although we love the roomy benches inside, the garden is without any doubt where we are having dinner the next time we visit The Promenade!

IFA's Membership Party mixed old and new friends



SAN MIQUEL -- Members and guests of the International Friends of Aruba gathered at the home of Michele and Dylan DeFrancisci on Friday, February 5, for the annual Membership Party. Everyone brought a dish of their favorite appetizer or dessert to share, and the group enjoyed a delicious feast, while appreciating Aruba's wonderful evening breezes. For more information about joining International Friends of Aruba, visit www.ifaruba.com. □

King Kong Cash is proud to present its first winner



PALM BEACH – The just installed Eight Wonder of the World, a bank of King Kong Cash slot machines at Cool Casino, Riu Palace Aruba, was proud to award Suzette de Mey with its first ever jackpot.

The novel bank of interactive, fun slot machines is attracting much attention on the popular casino floor. Sandro Lacle, Casino Manager and Marriene Henriquez, Marketing Coordinator, report that on Saturday, March 13th, King Kong and his blonde damsel in distress girlfriend, will visit the casino.

King Kong Cash slot machines, by Atronics, follow the story of Universal



Studio's monstrous movie adventure involving a beautiful actress and a huge Gorilla. Both mythical characters will be present on the island at Cool Casino interacting with players and teaching them how to play the game; they will also have lots of surprises for



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casino guests.

Atronics developed King Kong Cash as the latest giant step in linked gaming and it features a 4-level progressive jackpot and interactive bonus rounds. This game is guaranteed to be as thrilling as the movie, says Casino Manager Marc Charley, who is happy to report that the Kong is well and alive and living at Cool Casino.



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The Radisson hosts a North America Culinary Press Trip



PALM BEACH — The RadissonArubaResortCasino & Spa entertained members of the North America Culinary Press Trip over the weekend. The welcome party at the resort featured a reception at Larimar Spa followed by dinner by torchlight, right on the beach, toes in the sand. Members of the Radisson Aruba Resort Casino & Spa sales team Arianne Valentino & Lily Polsbroek hosted the dignitaries who were invited to experience the island's many culinary treasures by the Aruba Tourism Authority. The elegant tropical dinner, presented by the Sunset Grille Restaurant, and Sous Chef Martin Smeets, featured the restaurant's famed James Beard menu. Last year the AAA Four Diamond rated restaurant extended its reach when its culinary team cooked up a storm in New York City, hosting the Over Aruba Dinner at the prestigious James Beard House, which was officially sold out. The Sunset Grille chefs were invited to dazzle guests of the James Beard Foundation with their culinary magic, and the Aruban-inspired menu created by Executive Chef Hector Espinoza, in collaboration with Sous Chef Anthony Martinus tempted the palettes of Manhattan's most discerning "foodies." That same menu was replicated on the beach in honor of the visiting dignitaries and it included the creamy Cactus Soup. Each course was paired with the chef's selected wine that has been chosen to bring out the flavors of each dish. Pictured here the unforgettable seaside event orchestrated by the Radisson banquet team



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Aruba, Curacao Look Beyond Oil, Seek Green Energy



By Robert Curley

Even the biggest fans of Aruba and Curacao must admit that it's jarring for visitors to see the big oil refineries on these islands spewing tons of

pollutants across the otherwise brilliant blue Caribbean skies. It's part of the reality of living in a world fueled by hydrocarbons, and some of the fuel made here is destined

for U.S. gas tanks. However, it's good to know that both islands are also taking steps toward a greener future.

The Tera Kora and Playa Kanoa wind farms in Curacao, for example, will soon put out a combined 30 megawatts of clean power, and Aruba also is building a 30 megawatt wind farm -- a great legacy for future generations of residents of two islands where Dutch heritage and steady trade winds makes alternative energy projects like these a natural fit.

What is Wind Power and How Does It Work? Wind Power Generates Clean, Renewable Energy

Is Wind Power the Answer?

When Bob Dylan first sang Blowin' in the Wind in the early 1960s, he probably wasn't talking about wind power as the answer to the world's ever-increasing need for electricity and sources of clean, renewable energy. But that is what wind has come to represent for millions of people, who see wind power as a better way to generate electricity than plants fueled by coal, hydro (water) or nuclear power.

Wind Power Starts with the Sun

Wind power is actually a form of solar power, because wind is caused by heat from the sun. Solar radiation heats every part of the Earth's surface, but not

evenly or at the same speed. Different surfaces—sand, water, stone and various types of soil—absorb, retain, reflect and release heat at different rates, and the Earth generally gets warmer during daylight hours and cooler at night.

As a result, the air above the Earth's surface also warms and cools at different rates. Hot air rises, reducing the atmospheric pressure near the Earth's surface, which draws in cooler air to replace it. That movement of air is what we call wind.

Wind Power is Versatile

When air moves, causing wind, it has kinetic energy—the energy created whenever mass is in motion. With the right technology, the wind's kinetic energy can be captured and converted to other forms of energy such as electricity or mechanical power. That's wind power.

Just as the earliest windmills in Persia, China and Europe used wind power to pump water or grind grain, today's utility-connected wind turbines and multi-turbine wind farms use wind power to generate clean, renewable energy to power homes and businesses.

Wind Power is Clean and Renewable

Wind power should be considered an important component of any long-term energy strategy, because wind power generation uses a natural and virtually inexhaustible

source of power—the wind—to produce electricity. That is a stark contrast to traditional power plants that rely on fossil fuels.

And wind power generation is clean; it doesn't cause air, soil or water pollution. That's an important difference between wind power and some other renewable energy sources, such as nuclear power, which produces a vast amount of hard-to-manage waste.

Wind Power Sometimes Conflicts with Other Priorities
One obstacle to increasing worldwide use of wind power is that wind farms must be located on large tracts of land or along coastlines to capture the greatest wind movement. Devoting those areas to wind power generation sometimes conflicts with other priorities, such as agriculture, urban development, or waterfront views from expensive homes in prime locations.

The Future Growth of Wind Power

As the need for clean, renewable energy increases, and the world more urgently seeks alternatives to finite supplies of oil, coal and natural gas, priorities will change. And as the cost of wind power continues to decline, due to technology improvements and better generation techniques, wind power will become increasingly feasible as a major source of electricity and mechanical power. □



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		matinee: 12:15		
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The French Steakhouse delivers dining under the stars



Eagle Beach – The French Steakhouse at the Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa just added another charming dining option, a tropical outdoor courtyard, featuring delicious cuisine under the stars. The famed French Steakhouse prides itself on the elegant dining experience it offers patrons in the fully air-conditioned dining room. Yet recently the idea of adding a garden spot to the existing blueprint began to sprout in the creative mind of Executive Chef George Hoek, and he immediately recruited the landscapers to create the

intimate, lovely setting.

The French Steakhouse Ooh-La-La menu is now served indoor and alfresco, featuring creative appetizers, soups, salads, seafood dishes, poultry and the Pièce de Résistance South American & USDA Beef specialties.

Among popular appetizers the chef's Tropical Crab Cakes with pineapple & mango salsa and the Teriyaki Glazed Seared Duck Breast, served with garden greens and balsamic dressing, are real crowd pleasers.

True to the restaurant's French roots, the Onion Soup

is a classic, while the Honey Glazed Salmon Salad winks at the exotic East with a sweet soy dressing.

The menu features a great variety of seafood dishes from fresh fish to the totally sinful and amazingly-decadent Caribbean Stuffed Shrimp with Crabmeat and Bacon, which became an instant hit. The tequila and sweet chili glaze, lends the Jumbo shrimp a pure taste of heaven!



The French Steakhouse is naturally famous for the South American Churrasco steak, a signature preparation, which now shares the stage with juicy USDA beef specialties such as NY Sirloin and Filet Mignon.

Light-eaters will find the Jerk Chicken Skewers and the Lemon Herb Broilers very satisfying.

Open seven days a week from 5:30 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. the French Steakhouse is blessed with the nicest staff and a delightfully renovated dining

room with sparkling China, crisp linen, an interesting bread basket, colossal desserts and live jazz on piano with Eddy Samson who is Aruba's best entertainer, and a walking & breathing music encyclopedia, just whistle the tune, and Eddy will produce a symphonic version of your favorite song.

Hungry patrons will appreciate the Ambassador's 5-course menu featuring the run of the menu highlights for just \$34.95 per person. www.manchebo.com steakhouse □

Pega Pega Café & Beach Bar reinvents Beach Cuisine



Eagle Beach – Pega Pega Café & Beach Bar at the Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa is widely recognized as the home of Beach Cuisine.

Executive Chef George Hoek and his culinary team serve a Sun Splashed menu on the ocean front terrace, raising the restaurant to a must-visit, must-try status.



The contemporary menu, lists many favorite dishes from around the world, borrowing inspiration from US, Mexican, Thai, Jamaican, Cuban, Greek and Mediterranean kitchens, all served with a tropical, Caribbean flair.

From Sun-Sational Salads, to

Cuban pressed jawbreakers and wraps, mid-day platters also include oversize Beef Burgers, Philly Cheese Steak Sandwiches and Hot Dogs.

The Pega Pega tropical & frozen cocktail list, with fresh fruit or ice cream smoothies, daiquiris, coladas and margaritas, leaves nothing out, including Yellow Birds, Sex on the Beach and Mudslides, making a lunch-time brain-freeze, extremely easy to get! The Pega Pega, one of Aruba oldest beach bars is open on fabulous Eagle Beach, with unrivaled views, caring, gracious service, and relaxed atmosphere, from 12 noon to 5 p.m. The bar is open from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. □



Giorgio's Ristorante Italiano introduces Menu Turistico

Eagle Beach -- Giorgio's Ristorante Italiano located at the heart of the low-rise hotels at the Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa, delivers authentic Mediterranean flavors, at a reasonable price.

The restaurant has just introduced Menu Turistico a three-course dinner featuring appetizers, main courses and desserts for just \$19.95, per person, plus 15% service charge.

Patrons may choose between home made soup and Caesar salad, Fettuccini Alfredo, Lasagna Casarecia, Spaghetti alla Bolognese or any favorite pizza with Tiramisu, Cheese Cake or Ice Cream for the sweet finale.

Executive Chef George Hoek is the resort's much-appreciated culinary expert. He was the recent recipient of a Lifetime Achievement Award, presented by the Aruba Hotel & Tourism Association in collaboration with the Digicel Group. Chef George accepted the Shoco Award, the national award of excellence, and Aruba's top professional decoration, in the tourism industry. □



Children's Parades brimming with color and fun



Aruba, Dejakids and the Last lap band. The parade started around 1 p.m. on Sunday with

1,799 kids, and finished at 4:25 p.m., five minutes ahead of schedule, with 12 groups,

of dedicated mother and fathers, group organizers and designers, staging a unique street happening, filled with music and fun.

Don't miss our Plentiful Paella!

A dinner under the Caribbean sky!

Las Ramblas

Tapas & Charcoal Grill

Continued from Page B1
Among groups parading in colorful costumes, shoulder & head pieces, body & road pieces, and floats Baby Champagne, Astrid Jansen & Co, Nos Fofoti, Don Flip Carnival Group, Wizzkids Carnival Group, La Rochelita, Jolly Kids, New Generation Steel band, Centro di Barrio Noord, Grupo nos Futuro, Mini & Youth Danza



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PALM BEACH – The health and calorie conscious among us need fear steakhouses no more. Whether it's a low-carb, low-fat, or even vegetarian diet you follow, Texas de Brazil Churrascaria fits into just about every dieter's menu plan.

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The Brazilian-style steakhouse also offers a garden full of healthy eats on a lavish 40-item seasonal salad bar, giving dieters plenty to choose from to accompany the

slow-roasted meats. A selection of fresh lettuces and vegetables may be standard for most salad bars, but **Texas de Brazil's** version goes a gourmet twist further, treating the palate to additional items like marinated portabella mushrooms, sweet roasted bell peppers, hearts of palm, sundried tomatoes, imported cheeses—including fresh buffalo mozzarella—sushi, home-made soups, and much more.

The salad bar is included in the continuous service meal with unlimited choices from the grilled meats, but for vegetarians or the non-meat eaters, a special price is offered for just the salad bar. Of course, for those looking to splurge while on vacation, **Texas de Brazil** will gladly serve their garlic mashed potatoes, traditional fried plantains, and their world-famous parmesan cheese bread as part of the meal.

Restaurant open daily

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Sunday 5 pm - 11 pm

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<p>Malmokweg 22-R</p> <p>Nice custom build home in prestigious Malmok with views across the lagoon to Arashi beach. Only minutes walk to the beach. 3bed/3bath, living, dining area and nice kitchen with a breakfast area. Lot size: 663 m2 Build up area: 230 m2 Price: \$ 475,000</p>	<p>Caya Frere Bonifacius 15</p> <p>Caya Frere Bonifacius 15 Very nice 2 story home in a very good residential area! 3bed/2bath, Living, dining and kitchen area. Maids quarters. Fully fenced, alarm system and carport garage. Plenty of space to build a swimming pool. Lot size: 681 m2 Build up area: 260 m2 Price: \$ 260,000</p>	<p>Bubali 73-I</p> <p>Modern Caribbean 2 story Villa in Bubali only 5 minutes from Eagle Beach. 4bed/4bath, office room. Modern European kitchen, spacious living/dining area. Maids quarters. Nice entertainment area around the pool. A large covered Patio, bar and a built in BBQ area. Extra 600+m2 lot fenced with ready blue prints to build 12 apartments in the back. Excellent investment opportunity. Lot Size: 1550 m2 Property Land Price: \$510,000</p>	<p>Opel 133</p> <p>2 Story Ocean View Luxury Villa Brand New! 4bed/4bath newly built with custom materials from Spain & Italy. Gourmet kitchen, open terrace overlooking pool, Jacuzzi in the master bed room. This villa, meets and exceeds all luxury and comfort expectations. Lot Size: 938 m2 Property Land Price: \$ 1.3 Million</p>
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Kristi and Dwight tie the knot on Eagle Beach



EAGLE BEACH - “We knew we wanted to do something special and different for our wedding,” mused Kristi Walker, now Doan, “something just for the two of us, but we weren’t quite sure what to do.” “A

good friend of ours had recently attended a wedding in Aruba,” chimed in her husband since Wednesday, February 3, Dwight Doan. “He told us how beautiful the island was, so we did a little online research, and we

were sold.” Dwight and Kristi reside in Olathe, Kansas, a long way away from Aruba and the states where they grew up, Louisiana and California, respectively. Separate companies decided to transfer them to the Kansas City area, and after living there quite some time, a chance meeting through a mutual friend in August of 2007 blossomed into a life long love. Dwight and Kristi each bring two children to their union, and with Ryan, Jill, Alex and Sarah moved into the house of their dreams last summer; Dwight popped the question over dinner soon afterwards,



and marriage plans were quickly made. “We have a great chemistry” the couple declares, “but more than that, we laugh together constantly, which is what is really important.” Dwight was the family wedding planner in this

instance. He connected online with Karen Lutzker of Cayena Weddings, who referred them to Edwina Werleman of E2 Events and Celebrations in Aruba. The intimate sunset ceremony on Eagle Beach was performed by Reverend Jeffrey Benfield, and the special moment was captured by photographer Diane Keijzer.

“Aruba turned out to be everything we could possibly have wished for,” observed the happy couple, “We loved everything about our time here, and the ceremony was just perfect. Getting married in Aruba was the right choice; it went beyond all our expectations.” □



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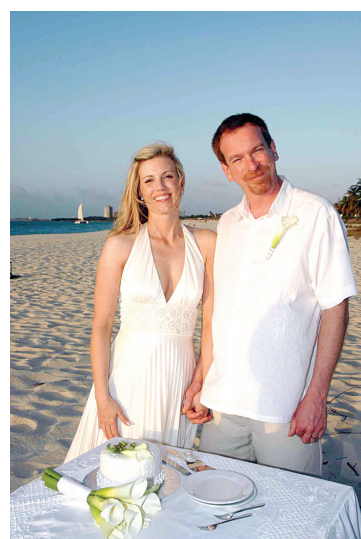
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Photo by Diane Keijzer



Elections everywhere!

By Terry Nisbett

Election energy is bouncing off our corner of the Caribbean. The Netherlands Antilles held parliamentary elections on Friday, January 22. Two days later on Monday, January 25, St. Kitts and Nevis held its general elections and next month Anguilla will have its elections on February 15. It is interesting how election dates in the neighbouring islands are so close.

The similarities continue. Because the Netherlands Antilles is a type of federal structure, elections for its parliament meant polling across the five island territories of Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, St. Eustatius and St. Maarten. Likewise in St. Kitts and Nevis which is a federation, general elections mean polling activity in St. Kitts and on Nevis too. In effect there were seven sets of elections. And there is still more election activity in the near future for the Netherlands Antilles and St. Kitts and Nevis. This time Nevisians alone will return to the polls in 2011 for local elections. Later this year, by October 10, there will be a historic change in the political relationship between the islands of the Netherlands Antilles and the Kingdom of the Netherlands and some islands will be choosing their individual island parliaments.

IT CAN SEEM like so many elections for small populations on small islands. Do the voters get tired of it all? Judging from the noise; the music; heated exchanges; fireworks in the air, on the platform and on the radio; the colours; the flag waving and the motorcades, I think they love it. Do not for one minute think that because the campaigns can take on a festive atmosphere at times that the voters are not serious. It would be hard to find an indifferent and apathetic citizen during election time in any of the islands just mentioned. Some are more vocal than others. I am not certain if it is the same in the Netherlands Antilles and

Anguilla, but in St. Kitts and Nevis, the women are very expressive about their politics. For this campaign the young people were battling it out on the Facebook pages with comments flying back and forth and pictures worth more or less than a thousand words. In the process, they were totally unaware of how they were demonstrating their level of education and the level of development of their country to enable their technology supported debates. Even the less vocal ones in the populace are quietly engaged in the process, listening and comparing and making a decision. One reason why the electorate does not seem tired of elections is their appreciation of the battle that the ancestors fought to obtain the right of adult suffrage. Caribbean people do not like going out in the rain. After a few heavy showers, some begin to hope that school is closed or there is no work for that day, but on election day in St. Kitts and Nevis, they stood in line under their umbrellas in order to vote. It was not comfortable and as we waited for hours in line, one young man, as he held his umbrella against the wind driven rain, made it clear that he was enduring the discomfort because his ancestors "fought for this." They value the freedom and the rights of the voter.

IT IS NOT JUST a sense of history which drives the enthusiasm. The present level of economic comfort or discomfort is a prime motive for involvement. Although many appeals are made to the electorate about the future and the expectations they should have about the future, I think human nature is such that most people will use the present circumstances to make a judgement on what they could reasonably expect, future notwithstanding.

The three territories which have been involved in elections are different political entities. Anguilla is an overseas territory of the United Kingdom and the islands of the Netherlands

Antilles are also territories of the Kingdom of the Netherlands while St. Kitts and Nevis is an independent country. Earlier in 2009, the Caribbean was generally displeased with the decision of the British government to have The Turks and Caicos Islands ruled by the Governor despite the fact that they had a lawfully elected government. This raises the question as to how valid is an election in a country which cannot really determine its own way? Would the threat or possibility of having their decisions overruled by the government of the parent country dampen and discourage the electorate from participating in the electoral process? It might in the Turks and Caicos, but it may make little difference in the Netherlands Antilles and Anguilla, but one can be sure that the people have pondered on the possibility of direct rule and on the ambiguity of their political status. But they are just as enthusiastic about their elections which allow choices and freedom

to determine the direction of their land within the limits of their situation. It is certainly preferable to have some say in your own affairs than none at all. So whether there is a possibility of direct rule, elections are still an important and valued exercise in a non independent territory.

I OVERHEARD one young woman say, "These are the best elections I can remember." Never mind that she was making the statement

some days before election day. This was someone who obviously had enjoyed the campaigning of the political parties in St. Kitts and Nevis. It certainly was interesting with cases in court even before election was called reversing the usual order of things which often sees queries being determined in court post election. It is obvious that the electorate enjoys the energy of an election. □

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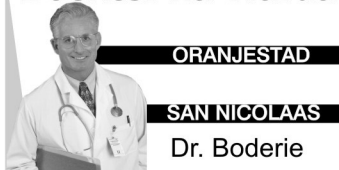
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Archaeology and Youth Exchange between St. Maarten-Barbuda

PHILIPSBURG - This article is one more in a series compiled by SIMARC students themselves to communicate to the St. Maarten community their experiences and observations relating to archaeology and culture of the island. SIMARC (St. Maarten Archaeological Centre) is a youth program focused on teenagers, directed by Dr. Jay Haviser, with support from the Island Government as well as the private sector. The 2009-2010 SIMARC student authors of this article are: Lashandra Pantophlet (St. Maarten Academy), Ivo Meijer (Caribbean International Academy), Kilee Mercuur (Learning Unlimited) and Jonathan van Arneman (St. Dominic High School). In July 2009, two students from the St. Maarten Archaeology Centre (SIMARC) attended the International Congress for Caribbean Archaeology (IACA) professional conference in Antigua. There they met Dr. Sophia Perdikaris, Ms. Edith Gonzalez and Mr. Cory Look of City University New York (CUNY) Brooklyn College. After the IACA conference, SIMARC President Dr. Jay Haviser and Dr. Sophia Perdikaris maintained contact, and SIMARC student Christopher Velasquez even went and attended CUNY courses in New York for a short time. For the last two years, CUNY students under the direction of Dr. Perdikaris have been conducting archaeological research on the island of Barbuda (which is part of the country Antigua-Barbuda). Dr. Perdikaris then invited to sponsor Dr. Haviser and four SIMARC students to join the university students on Barbuda to take part in a unique learning experience, and also to hopefully establish a youth link between Barbuda and St. Maarten. The four SIMARC students selected to participate in the Barbuda trip are the authors of this report. So for two months before the trip, together with all the other SIMARC students, they prepared a presentation for the Barbuda High School about what we do and how we can cooperate. The SIMARC

staff and students would like to thank all the sponsors (CUNY-Brooklyn College, USA National Science Foundation, Thingeyjarsveit Archaeological Association, Antigua and Barbuda National Parks, and the Barbuda Island Council) and especially Dr. Perdikaris herself, for this great opportunity to enact one of SIMARC's main goals, which is to have youth-to-youth exchange networks among the different Caribbean islands.

ALTHOUGH Barbuda is in the beginning stages of commercial and tourism development, as a hidden secret just behind Antigua, there are people on the island who want to protect its valuable cultural and natural resources, such as Councilman Calvin Gore, teacher John Mussington, park manager Kelly Burton, and Antigua archaeologist Dr. Reg Murphy, who all impressed and assisted us very much. We learned to understand that with this CUNY project, Barbuda now has a team of scientific professionals to help with their preservation goals. While St. Maarten has had preservation groups for many years, such as SIMARC, St. Maarten Heritage Foundation, St. Maarten Pride Foundation and EPIC, there still needs to be more attention to preservation of our nature and heritage from the authorities. Sometimes it takes another point of view from outside sources to realize when something like preservation is very special and on Barbuda these CUNY university students have started this. The SIMARC group left on January 17 for Antigua, where during a flight stay-over, we were able to visit the Nelson's Dockyard Museum and Heritage Centre. At Nelson's Dockyard we learned about Antiguan history and took a lot of pictures. We also saw an identical anchor to one found in the Great Bay Harbour on St. Maarten last year, and how they had restored a wooden stock for it in order to put it on display. We can adapt this idea for our own historic anchor and build a stock for it so that it can be displayed.

This will be a future project of SIMARC as the anchor is currently being stabilized in fresh water.

WITH ABOUT 62 square miles and 1,500 people, Barbuda is an island of coral limestone, similar to the terrain of Anguilla. The island of Barbuda is abundant in natural beauty and large caves, as well as lots of intact archaeological sites. Even with only one high school, the Barbudan students are very informed about global matters, such as global warming and rising sea levels, as their form of education is comparable to that of the British system. In comparison, St. Maarten is less than a third of the size of Barbuda and with triple the population! Despite being a short plane ride apart, St. Maarten and Barbuda are really very different and unique. During our visit, we assisted in archaeological fieldwork such as digging at excavations of a prehistoric village site, mapping of artefacts in a cave, and digging-sieving at excavations of an historical "castle" in the main town of Codrington. We also saw that Barbuda was not a plantation island in colonial times like St. Maarten was, so the historical sites are different from ours. With all of this work, we applied professionally-used, scientific methods and techniques for archaeological fieldwork.

We also took various island tours, one being to large caves far into the bush-country, where we saw a modern day "hunting camp." This is a place where traditional Barbudans go and live off the land. We observed the remains of hundreds of land turtle shells, deer bones and deer fur hanging on the branches of trees. This is a very rare ethnographic site with an important value for archaeological studies, seeing that today many of these animals are going extinct and few Caribbean peoples hunt them anymore, since now we go to the grocery store to purchase our food. The trash of olden times was perishable materials, but unfortunately now it is mostly plastics that do not dissolve, leaving long-term trash piles. Barbudans,

like St. Maarteners, have a central dumping ground for their modern trash, but the Barbudans are now searching for different ways to get rid of their waste in a healthier manner, including with the introduction of scientific possibilities which are also part of the environmental aspect of the CUNY project. DUE TO the small population and extensive land area, there are potentials for better nature and heritage preservation, especially at the Codrington Lagoon and in the country-side. The lagoon is very clean and has few boats, mostly fishing boats looking for lobsters. Also among the lagoon's mangroves are nesting grounds for frigate birds, with a huge frigate bird sanctuary. We took a tour of the area on a small fishing boat, and found that it's truly a beautiful place untouched by human hands. As it was nesting season, we watched as hundreds of these birds flew freely around us. Barbudans have such strong ties with the land, which is why they are very fortunate in having preserved archaeological sites; many historical buildings and ruins still remain in the main town of Codrington, unlike St. Maarten which has demolished so many of these valuable historical sites. While on Barbuda, our main SIMARC focus was to help the youth of the local Sir McChesney George Secondary School to appreciate archaeology and heritage, including the work of CUNY, and inspire them to be active in researching their own heritage. We made a PowerPoint presentation about the different achievements and activities SIMARC has done on St. Maarten over the years, and gave some ideas of what they too could do. At their school, they had already started a nursery for indigenous plants and so we could see they were on the right track to creating a group like SIMARC. We look forward to maintaining contact with them in the future, and hopefully we will be able to exchange ideas about what can be done on both islands.

BARBUDA IS rich in culture, partly due to the lack of

development. While driving along, we realized how few roads were actually paved; most were smoothed out dirt roads or just plain bumpy terrain. Like the island of St. Maarten, Barbuda too is growing and westernizing, just at a much slower rate. The people of Barbuda were very friendly to us, and you can see they have a growing interest in their heritage. We, the SIMARC students, encountered a rich sense of "Old Caribbean" culture among the Barbuda people, and especially the high-school students showed us great respect, which is why we want to continue our connection with the youth there. Another goal of SIMARC is to create an educational network among Caribbean islands, and through that networking to assist each island to instil pride in its own community and heritage, especially among the youth. We have already created contacts in Saba, St. Eustatius, Bonaire, Anguilla, Curaçao, and now Antigua-Barbuda. Recently, we were even contacted by Puerto Rico to create a youth connection with them. Thus, we hope to continue creating environmental and heritage awareness among the islands and thus play our role in bettering the Caribbean. It is important to "think globally and act locally," as we always say. If we can implement this mindset all over the Caribbean, the SIMARC youth will be able to make a difference.

In July 2011, there will be an IACA conference in Martinique. We hope that SIMARC students, Barbuda students, Bonaire students and other youth archaeology programs from around the Caribbean will be represented. Though the IACA conference is mainly for professionals, SIMARC and BONAI have shown in the past that youth can contribute effectively to the knowledge of the professionals. In 2011, we hope to continue to leave a lasting impact on the professionals of the Caribbean, that high school students are making a difference on their own islands, and that St. Maarten is at the spearhead of this youth movement. □

Eleccion presidencial en Costa Rica

Costarricenses podría elegir a una mujer como su presidenta

SAN JOSE (AP) - Los costarricenses votaban el domingo para decidir si por primera vez una mujer gobierna el país aunque represente la continuidad del Partido de Liberación Nacional o si opta por un cambio de dirección política en manos de dos candidatos que por tercera vez intentan llegar a la presidencia.

Las últimas encuestas divulgadas en la semana colocaron a la candidata oficialista Laura Chinchilla rondando el 40%, seguida por Otto Guevara con 23% y Ottón Solís con 20%, aunque la mayoría de analistas coincidían en que cualquier sorpresa era posible.

“Todo esto ha valido la pena. Vamos a ganar y en primera ronda”, manifestó Chinchilla, una politóloga de 50 años de edad quien afronta la posibilidad histórica de convertirse en la primera mujer en gobernar el país.

Chinchilla ingresó muy temprano el domingo a la Catedral Metropolitana, donde junto a otros aspirantes participó en una misa que se realiza de forma tradicional el día de las elecciones. Estuvo ausente Solís, quien a la misma hora ejercía su sufragio en su natal Pérez Zeledón, al sur del país.

Poco después Chinchilla fue a votar a la populosa zona del sur de la capital, donde una marea de gente le dificultó llegar a su mesa de votación y antes de ejercer su voto repartió besos, abrazos, recibió flores y se tomó fotografías con seguidores. Arias agradeció a los costarricenses, al Tribunal Supremo de Elecciones “por permitirnos disfrutar una vez más de elecciones transparentes y confiables e incluso a los observadores internacionales “a pesar que Costa Rica tiene más que enseñar que aprender” □



El candidato presidencial costarricense Otto Guevara, del opositor Movimiento Libertario, saluda a simpatizantes en las afueras de San José, el sábado 6 de febrero de 2010. (Foto AP/Zoraida Díaz)

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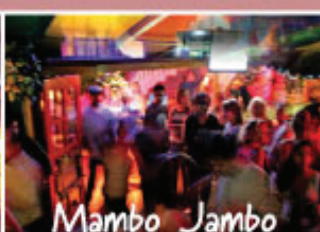
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